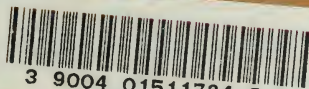


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S P E E C H
OF THE
HON. GEO. W. ROSS,
MINISTER OF EDUCATION,

At his Nomination, October 11th, 1886,

ON

The Progress of Our Schools, Text Books,
and Religious Instruction.

In opening, Mr. Ross referred to the policy of the Mowat Government in regard to Provincial rights, municipal legislation, enforcement of the Temperance Act, and the administration of justice. He then proceeded to discuss more fully legislation affecting the Education Department. He said: We have placed the Education Department directly under the control of the people. Although there is no doubt as to the ability of the late Dr. Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Education, still it must not be forgotten that under him our school system was essentially bureaucratic. The members of the late Council of Public Instruction, except during the last year of its existence, were the nominees of the Crown, and no more responsible to the people of Ontario than the Senate of Canada or the House of Lords in England. By the legislation of 1876, the members of the Executive, or a committee thereof, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor, were constituted the Education Department, thus preserving in its fullest integrity the direct responsibility of the Department to the people. That this course was meditated by the Administration of Mr. Sandfield Macdonald is quite clear. In 1869, Dr. Ryerson, in sending in for the first time his resignation as Chief Superintendent, recommended the appointment of a member of the Executive to take his place, with the title of Minister of Public Instruction. The Hon. M. C. Cameron declined to accept it "until His Excellency's advisers shall have more fully considered your suggestion and matured a measure for placing your Department under the direct control of a member of the Executive." For the first time in the history of Ontario the head of the Education Department is made directly responsible to the people, through the Parliament

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elected by the people and controlled by the people. To go back to the old system of a Chief Superintendent would be to act contrary to all the tendencies of democratic legislation.

2. We have extended the control of Parliament over all school legislation. The old Council of Public Instruction had the right to make regulations under the Statute in regard to school programmes, text-books, hours of study, religious instruction, the duties of teachers, pupils, etc., which were of the utmost importance, and, in many cases, as far reaching as an Act of Parliament. These regulations had gone on accumulating until in 1834 they covered 135 pages. Against them there was no appeal to Parliament; and there was no means of altering them except with the consent of the Council that framed them. By the Public Schools Act of 1885 the regulations of the Education Department are made subject to the approval of the people's representatives to the same extent as any bill submitted to the House for its consideration. Last session they were revised and consolidated until they now occupy only 64 pages—one very gratifying result of this consolidation being that it has reduced the departmental correspondence in regard to the interpretation of the school law more than one-half.

3. We have amended the School law in the following particulars :

(1) Before 1879, school trustees determined, without reference to the people, how much money should be expended for the erection of a new school-house or the enlargement of a school site; now there can be no expenditure of money for either of such purposes without first obtaining the consent of the ratepayers concerned at a public meeting called for considering the question.

(2) Formerly trustees levied and collected all taxes for school purposes at a great expense to the ratepayers; now they are able to employ the ordinary municipal machinery for this purpose. The saving in this way alone for the collection of the sum of \$2,685,621 paid for the support of schools by local taxation, even allowing two per cent. for collection, would amount to \$52,000 per annum, or \$728,000 in fourteen years.

(3) We have provided for a proper system of auditing school accounts, thus giving greater security against improper expenditure.

(4) We have simplified the machinery for the establishment of schools in the remote districts, and extended the benefits of a liberal education to the pioneer settlers of Muskoka and Algoma.

(5) We have given the right to trustees in cities, towns, and incorporated villages to apply the ballot to school elections, and to employ for this purpose the officers of the municipality engaged in conducting the municipal elections. By this means much money is saved and a fuller expression of public opinion obtained.

(6) We have provided that school debentures shall be issued by the municipality, and not by the school section, as formerly, so that school trustees are able to borrow money at a lower rate of interest, and very often on much better terms as to premium, etc.

(7) We have simplified the machinery for forming, altering or dissolving union school sections.

(8) We have arranged for the gradual extinction of the superannuated teachers' fund.

(9) We have fixed more definitely than before the holidays for Public and High schools.

(10) We have simplified the curriculum of studies for the Public schools. The effect of this has been to reduce the number of classes in a Public school from 33 classes under the old regulations to 21 under the new. This will certainly give the teacher more time for the essential subjects. As over 90 per cent. of the pupils leave school before they reach 14 years of age, we owe it to them that the time of the teacher be not frittered away by a multiplicity of studies which can only be undertaken to the detriment of the majority.

And here I might perhaps answer a silly objection which I observed in a newspaper the other day, to the effect that I was opposed to the formation of fifth classes in the Public schools. The law prescribes five classes as the complete Public school course. Trustees have no option but to establish a fifth class if the interests of their schools so require. But as the first class in the High school is identical with the fifth class of the Public school, I have recommended trustees, both on the score of efficiency and economy, not to establish a fifth class in places possessing High school advantages. I have so much regard for the taxpayer that I do not propose to ask him to pay two men for doing the work of one, unless the trustees take the responsibility upon their own shoulders, and as High schools are usually better equipped than Public schools, I believe it is to the interest of the pupil to go on with his advanced work in the High school. Many other amendments of a minor character have been made affecting the duties of teachers, trustees, pupils and inspectors, but to dwell upon each would occupy more time than we have at our disposal. But the real, practical test of our legislation and management is the educational effect upon the country. The evidence of this can only be given by statistics, and I think they are conclusive. I have put them in tabular form for the sake of convenience. Taking the last year of Conservative rule as the starting point :—

	1871.	1884.
Number of children attending school.....	446,326	466,917
Number not attending any school.....	38,535	6,230
Average attendance.....	188,294	221,861
Number of schools open.....	4,598	5,316
Number of brick school-houses.....	898	1,879
Number of stone school-houses.....	425	511
Number of frame school-houses.....	1,928	2,323
Number of log school-houses.....	1,425	631
Total expenditure for Public schools since 1871.....	\$40,930,271	
Total amount paid for sites and buildings since 1871.....		6,164,415
Total amount paid for maps, apparatus, etc., since 1871.....		491,027
Total amount paid for rents and repairs since 1871.....		5,274,700
Total receipts for all educational purposes since 1871.....		55,264,601
Total Government grants for all educational purposes since 1871.....		\$7,132,253

TEACHERS.

	1871.	1884.
Number of teachers.....	5,306	7,085
First-class certificates (Provincial)....	327	235
Second-class certificates (Provincial)....	571	2,237
Old Country Board certificates.....	3,415	286

CLASSIFICATION.

Number in spelling.....	293,316	410,992
Number in writing.....	290,175	416,588
Number in arithmetic.....	298,471	422,076
Number in grammar.....	149,164	220,566
Number in geography.....	176,391	280,953
Number in history.....	41,420	94,754
Number in drawing.....	29,516	247,715
Number in music.....	89,909	150,510
Number in drill and calisthenics.....	10,198	101,847
Number in algebra.....	10,379	10,064
Number in geometry.....	4,735	10,884
Number in temperance and hygiene.....		52,996

SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

Besides the Public school system of Ontario, which is undenominational, we have three other classes of elementary schools—coloured Separate schools, Protestant Separate and Roman Catholic Separate schools, the last being the most numerous. You are no doubt aware that under the British North America Act of 1867, the supporters of Separate schools were guaranteed certain privileges which the Local Legislature may extend, but which they cannot abridge. You will also no doubt see, that as a part of our school system, now dealing with the education of nearly 30,000 children, it is clearly my duty to promote the efficiency of the Separate schools as much as it is to aid the Public and the High schools. It will surely not be said, if any real grievance in the working of the Separate Schools Act existed, that that grievance should not be removed, and let me here enter my protest against the alleged grounds on which amendments are made to the Separate School Act, that is, that they are concessions to the Roman Catholics, or that they are made to conciliate Roman Catholics for political purposes. If the question of legislation is to be considered on these narrow grounds, then it may be shown that all legislation has its origin in some ulterior motive, and that there is no such thing as political honour, or no such consideration, as justice *per se*. When the supporters of Separate schools apply to the Government for such legislation as would aid them in carrying out the intentions of the law—a law, mind you, which we find upon the Statute book—what is our duty? To tell them we cannot do it because they are Roman Catholics? Is that what you would expect of a Liberal Government, whose traditions for over half a century have demonstrated its readiness to redress grievances of every character? Certainly not. Our duty is to see whether the changes proposed are wise, prudent and effectual; and, if so, to make them, or to ask Parliament to make them, and not to ask questions as to whether the petitioners are Catholics or

Protestants. It is in this spirit, we have dealt with the Separate Schools Act, and it is on this account that we are blamed by some who have no appreciation of the duties which Parliament owes to every class of Her Majesty's subjects, irrespective of creed, race or colour. It is said again, that while Catholics have the right to determine what is good and requisite for Separate schools, they have no right to express any opinion respecting the Public school system of the country. But the Public school system, so far as they avail themselves of it, is as much theirs as it is anybody else's. As a matter of fact, it is used by them to a greater extent than the Separate school. Out of a Catholic school population of about 80,000, over 50,000 attend the Public school. Shall we make it impossible for them to avail themselves of privileges for which they are obliged by law to pay, by connecting these privileges with religious obligations to which they cannot conscientiously subscribe? The duty of the State is to protect the liberty of the subject, not to hamper it; to extend where practicable, not to curtail. Acting on this principle we have endeavoured to promote the efficiency of Separate schools, and we have done it for the same reason as we have legislated for Public schools, viz., to diffuse as widely as possible the benefits of a good English education. To begin with: Last session we amended and consolidated the Separate Schools Act. We had treated the Public Schools Act in a similar way the previous session. We are now framing regulations for Separate schools dealing with the same matters as are taken up in the regulations respecting Public schools.

(2) We have amended the law so that now where land is assessed against owner and tenant, the tenant shall be the person to say whether the taxes shall be applied for Separate school purposes.

The object of this amendment was to enable the man who paid the rent, and therefore, no matter how disguised, paid the taxes, to determine the purpose to which his school taxes should be applied, and this applies to Protestants and Catholics.

(3) Now a company may, by notice to the clerk of the municipality, require the proportion of stock or personal property of the Roman Catholics comprising such company to be assessed for Separate school purposes.

This is merely extending to personal property the same principle which always applied to real estate.

(4) Trustees of Separate schools may now use municipal machinery for the collection of their school rates, if they so desire, in the same way and with the similar powers as Public school trustees.

(5) A municipal council may enter into an agreement with the Separate school, where the majority of such council are not Separate school supporters, to pay over to the Separate School Board so much of the school taxes collected as may represent the assessment of Protestants and Catholics in the municipality proportionately.

These are some of the most important amendments relating to taxation and assessment, but there are others to which special objection is taken on

the ground that they are exceptional, if not worse. First, it is said that under the Separate Schools Act as amended by the Liberal Government, every Roman Catholic is primarily a Separate school supporter where Separate schools exist. Formerly it is said he was a Public school supporter, and could only change his status by notice to the clerk of the municipality. Practically, however, the same result was obtainable under the old as under the new Act. A Catholic under the old Act could, by notice to the clerk of the municipality, (which he was not required to give annually), be ranked for all time to come as a Separate school supporter. Now, if entered on the assessment roll as a Separate school supporter—and this cannot be done by the assessor against his will—he may change his status by notice to the clerk, as in the former case. There is no restraint upon his liberty of action in either case, and he is not required to make up his mind in one week, as is alleged; he may give notice any time between the final revision of the assessment roll and the second Wednesday of January in each year. Again, it is said Catholics are allowed representation on the Board of High School Trustees, a privilege denied to other denominations. The same objection applies to the whole Separate school system. But why was this representation allowed? Catholics complained that they were very often ignored in the appointments made to the High school boards, and that as a consequence they were unable to excite that degree of interest in higher education among their Separate school supporters that was desirable. They felt, by their exclusion from these boards, that Protestants regarded the High school as something in regard to which they should not be consulted, notwithstanding that they paid for their support as others did. Now, I am not saying that this was a justifiable feeling, although in many instances there was substantial ground for it. They represented to the Government that they believed the confidence which would be felt by their people in High school management, by the proposed representation, would be helpful to the Separate school, and with this object in view their request was granted. Now, in proof of their sincerity, it has been found that in some instances, when they were already represented on High school boards by appointments previously made, they have not availed themselves of the privilege conferred upon them by the law. In other cases they made the Catholic appointee on the board their representative, leaving the local authorities to fill his place as was deemed best. It is also said that the inspectors of Separate schools are paid out of the Provincial treasury, while the inspectors of Public schools in cities and towns are paid exclusively from local taxation, and that in this respect the Catholics are specially favoured. Now, what are the facts in this case? Formerly the Separate schools were inspected by the High school inspectors, or by the Public school inspectors. It was found, however, impracticable to continue this, for several reasons: 1. The High school inspectors had plenty to do without being charged with this duty. 2. The two duties were incompatible on account of the great difference in the work of the two classes of schools. 3. It was but natural that the teachers of Separate schools would receive

instructions from those who sympathised with their system of education more readily than from those who were educated in a different way. Therefore, to get the best results, it was thought proper, and in the interest of education, to appoint Separate school inspectors. But secondly, as to the mode of paying these officers. Here again let us apply ordinary common sense. The Separate schools, 207 in number, are scattered all over Ontario—in some counties ten, and in some three or four. Inspectors could not be appointed by county councils as Public school inspectors are, because there would be practically nothing for them to do. Even in our largest cities, taken singly, the inspection of Separate schools would be a mere trifle. There remained no other way of getting the work done than through officers specially appointed. But why not charge the Roman Catholics with the cost of this inspection? No doubt this could be done, but if so they would, and with very good reason, too, claim exemption from their share of Public school inspection where they did not avail themselves of the public schools. The Province of Ontario paid last year \$30,000 from the Provincial treasury for Public school inspection, and the county councils paid an equal sum. Of this the Catholics of Ontario paid their share, although they got no benefit directly from this expenditure. Is it unreasonable, then, that the public treasury should be charged with the small sum of \$2,900 paid as salary to two Separate school inspectors. Whether censurable or not for our efforts to improve the efficiency of the Separate schools, the following facts will furnish very gratifying evidences of their progress under a Liberal Government :—

	1871.	1884.
Number of Separate schools	160	207
Number of pupils in attendance.....	21,200	27,463
Expenditure.....	\$69,818	\$176,477
Number of teachers.....	249	427
Number of pupils in writing.....	13,257	23,139
Number of pupils in arithmetic.....	13,173	23,705
Number of pupils in geography.....	7,975	15,108
Number of pupils in grammar.....	7,336	13,637
Number of pupils in music.....	4,432	12,328
Number of pupils in history.....	3,186	7,996
Number of maps.....	131	1,640
Number of pupils in temperance and hygiene..	5,082
Number of pupils in algebra.....	502	646
Number of pupils in geometry.....	223	1,032
Number of pupils in drawing.....	12,220

HIGH SCHOOLS.

In the same way we have improved the High School Act. (1) By encouraging the development of High schools into collegiate institutes, thus promoting the higher education of the community. (2) By providing an entrance examination to High schools. (3) By distributing the grant to High schools in such a way as to recognize all expenditure for teachers' salaries, equipment, and comfort of the pupils. (4) By adapting the High school

course to the curriculum of the University, thus economizing the teaching power of the school. (5) By arranging the course of studies in the High school so as to admit pupils without making the study of the classics imperative. (6) By providing for a thorough course of training for High school masters and assistants by means of training institutes. (7) By raising the qualifications of High school assistants.

I cannot wait to discuss these details, but as proof of their beneficial effect I submit the following evidence of progress :—

	1871.	1884.
Number of High schools and Collegiate institutes.....	102	106
Number of pupils attending.....	7,490	12,737
Number of teachers.....	174	358
Number of Collegiate institutes.....	8	17
Number who matriculated since 1871.....		2,644
Number who left High schools for an agricultural life since 1871		6,283
Ditto, mercantile life.,		8,747
Ditto, learned professions.....		7,214
Total amount expended, since 1871, on High schools, etc., for instruction.....		\$4,730,365

NORMAL SCHOOLS.

But the efforts of the Government were not confined to High schools and similar institutions. For instance, in 1871 there was but one Normal school, namely, the one in Toronto. In 1874 another was erected at Ottawa, at a cost of \$97,554. The number of teachers who took a Normal school course, since the formation of the Toronto Normal school, in 1846, down to 1871, was 6,418 ; the number of teachers who took a Normal school course since 1871 is 4,566. The amount expended on Normal schools since 1871 was \$498,958.

COUNTY MODEL SCHOOLS.

were first established in 1877, for the purpose of providing for the training of third-class teachers. Since their establishment they have been attended by 9,567 teachers, at an expense to the Province of \$132,600, including the sums paid by county councils. To get the work of county Model schools done by Normal schools would involve an expenditure of at least \$300,000 in buildings, and an annual charge on the revenue of the Province of \$75,000, or the sum of \$1,000,000 in fourteen years, all of which has been practically saved by the model school system.

TEACHERS' INSTITUTES.

Teachers' associations were first established on a properly organized basis under regulations passed by the Education Department in 1877. Since that time they have grown beyond all precedent. The number of members in 1877—the first year for which there is a regular report—was 1,881 ; in 1884

the number was 5,189, or 70 per cent. of the whole profession. The amount expended by the Government upon their support since 1877 was \$23,353; in addition to this the municipalities furnished \$2,650, and the teachers themselves expended the sum of \$6,220, all of which sums were devoted to the formation of teachers' libraries and other purposes of a professional character. In order to make these associations as useful and practical as possible, the Government has appointed a director, whose sole business is to instruct teachers in matters pertaining to their profession. The work done in this way compares favourably with the best States in the American Republic. In Massachusetts, in 1883, the amount expended by the Legislature for this purpose was \$1,700, but out of 8,861 teachers only 1,941 attended the meetings of the association, or 18 per cent. New York expended \$16,040, but only 13,231 out of 30,826 teachers, or about 44 per cent. attended the meetings. New York has four directors, or lecturers, while Ontario has only one.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTES.

The sum expended since the year in which mechanics' institutes were placed under the supervision of the Minister of Education, (1880), was \$298,471.

	1884.
Number of members.....	16,259
Number of volumes in libraries.....	230,917
Number of volumes read.....	528,971
Number of reading-rooms.....	68
Number of evening classes.....	62

A new feature of the work now done by mechanics' institutes is the great attention paid to mechanical drawing. In 1884 there were 42 classes in this subject alone, attended by 4,764 students in the different branches of drawing. The effect of this upon the industrial classes is hard to over-estimate.

ART SCHOOLS.

In 1871 Ontario could not boast of a single art school; in 1884 there were no less than six. These art schools aim at giving practical instruction in freehand drawing, modeling, machine drawing, etc., and are attended by artisans representing every occupation in the country.

The expenditure on this department, although just in its infancy, amounted to \$8,768.

Besides these the Ontario Government has expended since 1871 the sum of \$124,625, in aid of literary and scientific societies generally. In Toronto it aids the Canadian Institute, the Ontario Society of Artists, the School of Practical Science, and the School of Art and Design; in Ottawa it aids the Institut Canadien, the Literary and Scientific Society, and St. Patrick's Literary Association; in Hamilton it aids the Historical Society, and in London, the School of Art and Design.

TEXT-BOOKS.

One of the duties imposed by statute upon my Department is the authorization of text-books for the schools of the Province. The regulations on this subject, which I had the honour to frame, and which were unanimously approved by both sides of the House, require that all Public school text-books shall be published in Canada, that the Department shall hold the copyright of such books, that any publisher may publish them on protecting the rights of the original publishers, subject to the approval of the Department in regard to typography, binding, etc., and that the price shall be a fair market price. In regard to books used in the Public schools, it is the policy of the Department to secure uniformity, not only for the convenience of the teacher in classification, but for the sake of parents, who would otherwise be liable to incur the expense of purchasing new books with every change of residence. I might say that this in effect has been the policy of the Education Department for over 30 years, although not in every instance fully carried out. When I assumed office, as you are no doubt aware, I was confronted with the reader question, so called. My predecessor favoured the authorization of more than one series of text-books in each subject, and had just prior to his illness all but completed his arrangements for placing three series of Readers upon the market. Two had already been authorized, and the third was under consideration. In re-establishing the system, which I then and now believe to be the true one, I had two difficulties to overcome—(1) to get rid of the books authorized either in fact or conditionally, without inflicting a wrong upon the publishers who had invested several thousands of dollars in the undertaking, on the strength of the authority of the Government to publish, and (2) to avoid inflicting a loss upon those who had already purchased the new readers for the use of their children. In dealing with the publishers, I might have ascertained their loss by a commission, and paid them a lump sum, or, what I thought was fairer to the public, give a limited interest in the publication of the new series, which, without enhancing the cost of the readers to the consumers, would enable them out of the ordinary profits of publication to indemnify themselves for their loss. I know you will agree as to the justice of this course to the publishers, and when you ascertain, as I propose to show you, that the books are no dearer on that account, you will admit, I am sure, that the settlement made was a peculiarly satisfactory one from a public standpoint. Again, in order to protect those who were using the old readers from loss, I permitted their use for eighteen months, that being the ordinary life of a school-book. The conditions under which these books are published are certainly exacting enough. 1. The publishers must comply with our regulations as to the quality of the books as a manufactured article. 2. An officer of the Department has the right to examine every book in all its stages of manufacture, from the printing press till it is ready for shipment. 3. No alterations are allowed without the consent of the Department. 4. If it appears that the new readers afford

too large a profit to the publishers, the Department has the power, at the end of five years, to reduce the selling price to the consumer. 5. In the event of the publishers violating the conditions of the contract in any substantial way, the Department may cancel the same and offer the publication to some other firm; but if, on the other hand, the contract is in all material respects kept inviolate, then it remains in full force and effect for ten years. 6. It is also a condition of the agreement that the books should be printed and published in Canada. The earlier editions of the Irish readers were published in Great Britain, the old Ontario readers in Glasgow, the Royal readers in Edinburgh, and Gage's in the United States. For the first time in the history of Ontario, it may be said that we have a purely Canadian series.

Now there are two main objections urged against my course on this question: the first is that I have established a monopoly, and the second that the books are too dear. In regard to the first it must be noticed that the books are published by three firms; that the price of each book is fixed by agreement, and that even if published by fifty firms there is no probability that the books would be sold for less than the price fixed by law. There can be no monopoly in the true sense of the term except when the monopolists themselves regulate the price of the article, as do the cotton lords and certain other large manufacturers of woollen and iron goods. But even under Dr. Ryerson the publication of text books was limited to a few men. Campbell published the old readers from 1868 to 1871, Campbell and Warwick from 1871 to 1878, and during the fifteen years they remained authorized there were only four publishers in all supplying them to the trade. Even if the new readers were thrown open to public competition, not more than six firms in Ontario could be found with suitable plant for the kind of work required. But before dismissing the cry of "monopoly," let me ask in all kindness who is it that raises the cry? Does it not come from those who politically supported the Pacific Railway scheme in the undisturbed possession of their trade of half a continent for twenty years? But it is said the policy of the Government was framed in the interest of Mr. Nelson, who is a large stockholder in the *Globe*. This I deny. Mr. Nelson has his share, no doubt, of the profits, but he was the loser to the extent of over \$25,000 by the withdrawal of authorization from his readers. Why not say it was framed to suit the two other firms, with whom an agreement in identical terms was made? Nelson derived no advantage in which they didn't share equally, and certainly they are not political allies of the Government.

Secondly, it is said the readers are too dear.

The following comparisons show the relative prices of the new series with those previously authorized or prepared:

Authorized series—	Pages.	Cost.	Cents per 100
			Pages.
Gage's.....	752	\$1. 31	17½
Royal.....	972	1. 50	15½
Royal Canadian.....	955	1. 80	18¾
New Readers.....	976	1. 35	13¾

The average price of the series discarded is \$1.53 ; the price of the new series is \$1.35, showing a difference of 18 cents in favour of the new series.

The following statement will show the price of some of the most popular

AMERICAN READERS.

	Pages.	Price.	Cents per 100 pages.
Wilson series.....	911	\$1 79	19½
Sheldon's, New York.....	890	1.92	21½
Swinton's, New York.....	922	1.80	19½
Appleton's, New York.....	694	1.72	24¾
McGuffey's, Cincinnati.....	656	1.39	21
Barnes' New Reader.....	894	1.75	19½
Lippincott's	818	1.57	19
Collins' (English).....	694	1.22½	17½
Collins' (Progressive).....	692	1.10½	15¾

It is quite evident from these figures that the new readers are cheaper than any furnished by the trade either in Great Britain or the United States.

COST OF PREPARING THEM.

The new readers cost.....	\$18,686
Gage readers (½ less in size) cost.....	19,175
Nelson readers cost.....	25,000
Royal Canadian readers cost.....	31,843

Practically the readers will cost the treasury nothing, for, besides the amount received from the publishers already for the plates and the amount to be paid hereafter for renewals, the whole outlay will be met, and in addition there is the far more important consideration, viz. : the educational effect of text books unsurpassed either in the United States or Great Britain.

CHANGES OF TEXT BOOKS.

It is said : You are changing our school books very often. Let me explain. In the case of readers there have been only two changes in 33 years. The Irish National series was used from 1846 to 1867 ; the old Canadian series from 1867 to 1884. In some schools the Gage and Royal readers were introduced in 1883, but their use was not general. It is quite probable the present series will last the remainder of this century ; so there is very little ground for complaint in regard to readers. Now, in the case of other text books, the trustees have the matter in their own hands. By section 207 of the Public Schools Act no change can be made in the text books used in any subject without the concurrence of the inspector and the trustees. So if you have changes you are yourselves to blame. If you observe the law, then there need have been no change in the arithmetic since 1869, in geography since 1877, in grammar since 1877, in history since 1875, in algebra since 1865, in geometry since 1838, in chemistry since 1875, in physics since 1875. That is to say since Dr. Ryerson retired from office the only text books generally used which were forced upon you by the Department were a grammar, a geography, and the Readers. This is certainly a fair degree of permanence.

In the books used in our High schools changes necessarily occur in many of the texts, because the course is based upon university work, and that is not controlled by the Education Department. But I am charged with having forced upon the schools of Ontario 23 changes in text books during the three years of my administration—certainly a serious charge, if true. First, let me notice in a general way the amount of studied and disingenuous exaggeration contained in this charge. The readers, although but one series, are made to count as six text-books; the drawing course, consisting of five numbers, counts as five text-books; and then to swell the aggregate and alarm the public an exercise book, in commercial forms, consisting of three numbers, which has not been authorized and which does not require authorization, is thrown in, so that what fairly might be called two text-books is made to appear as fourteen. But the important thing to know is, what have I actually done? Well, I have authorized the readers, and there is not a teacher, certainly not a pupil of the 500,000 in Ontario, capable of judging, but is glad I have. And I have also authorized the drawing books, because there were none authorized before and I thought it necessary, as we were beginning the study of this subject, that we should lay a proper foundation. I have also authorized a new history of England and Canada, because it was desirable to study history after a better method. Now, except in the case of the readers no text-book used in our schools was displaced by the action of my Department. There was no authorized drawing book to displace and the history can not legally be introduced before 1887 without the concurrence of the trustees and the inspector. Now, as to the others, with the exception of the music readers, they are either recommended simply, which means they are not text-books in the true sense of the term, or they are used by teachers or teachers-in-training. It is also worthy of notice that parts 1 and 2 of the First Reader were authorized by the school authorities of Manitoba, and the Drawing Books by the Council of Public Instruction for Quebec, for use in the schools of these Provinces respectively.

SAVING EFFECTED.

Let me next mention that every change made in text-books has resulted in a large saving to the public—a material argument, to be sure, but a potent one. Let me begin with the new High School Reader, which is sold for 60 cents. This book represents the following outlay in discarded text books: 1. A text book on the art of reading, which was authorized at 75 cents. 2. The prescribed literature for third-class teachers, 25 cents; old Fifth Reader, 60 cents; total, \$1.60. There is a clear saving of \$1 to the 8,693 who use the new readers in our public schools, and to about 10,000 who use it in the High schools, or about \$17,000 in one year to the people of Ontario. Then take the drawing course, assuming that only one book or number is used by each pupil during the year. The discarded drawing book which was not authorized, consisted of 24 pages and was sold for 15 cents; the new drawing book consists of 32 pages and is sold for 10 cents—a differ-

ence of 7 cents to each pupil studying this subject. This, multiplied by the number in drawing in our Public and High schools last year (over 250,000) represents a saving of \$17,500. Not a bad financial stroke, surely. Then take the History Primer. In 1887 this book will displace the old text-books which were sold separately for 30 cents each—the 'new book, containing the two histories in one, being sold for 35 cents. This effects a saving to each of the 104,000 pupils in our Public and High schools studying this subject of 25 cents, or \$26,000 in all in one year. And lastly, but I weary you, I will mention another book now used in our Normal and Model schools—Baldwin's Art of School Management. This book was sold up to this year for \$1.60. I secured the preparation of a new edition and added, by way of appendix, the school law required for Model schools. The new work now takes the place, at 75 cents per copy, of the old book which cost alone \$1.60, and with the school law purchased, as it needs must be, 50 cents more—thus effecting a saving of \$1.35 to each of the 2,000 teachers in training who would require to purchase the work annually—another nugget of \$2,700. In these four cases, then, the parents of pupils and teachers are saved an expenditure of over \$52,000. You will allow me to say with becoming modesty that this is not a bad record on the difficult question of text-book supplies.

THE BIBLE IN SCHOOL.

The moral education of the people is a subject of deep interest to every lover of his country. Apart altogether from its connection with a future state of existence, it has associations of a practical character in the actual present which cannot be ignored. The whole social fabric rests upon well established principles of moral or religious belief. Our relations to our fellow-men, the laws which regulate our conduct as citizens, in fact, every outward act as well as every inner motive, comes within its purview. To frame a system of education, then, without providing for some form of religious instruction would be to disregard one of the most important elements of education requisite for citizenship, viz., power of religion over life and conduct. Every true educator recognizes that to impart knowledge is the least important part of the teacher's work. His influence in the formation and development of character, his power to suppress evil tendencies, to stimulate effort through proper motives, to foster a love for what is good and true for their own sakes—these are the higher functions of the teacher, and it is on this account that his position is so intimately allied with the moral prosperity of the country.

Having regard to this view, the old Council of Public Instruction in 1846 sanctioned, for the schools of Upper Canada, the Scripture extracts authorized by the Irish National Board—a volume similar in many respects to the Scripture Readings recently authorized by the Education Department. As this volume was neither republished in Canada nor supplied gratuitously to trustees, it did not come into general use. Still the subject of religious instruction was not overlooked. I admit, with our denominational differences, the

question was always a difficult one. Apart altogether from the views entertained by the different denominations as to the form which religious instruction should take, and the authority on which it should be based, there still remained the fact that the common school, as it was then called, was, as it is to-day, undenominational, and attended by the children of both Protestants and Catholics. As a *via media* out of the difficulty the old Council of Public Instruction promulgated the following regulations :

“ With a view to secure the Divine blessing, and to impress upon the pupils the importance of religious duties, and their entire dependence on their Maker, the Council of Public Instruction recommend that the daily exercises of each Public school be opened and closed by reading a portion of Scripture, and by prayer. The Lord’s Prayer alone, or the forms of prayer hereto annexed, may be used, or any other prayer preferred by the trustees or master of each school. But the Lord’s Prayer shall form part of the opening exercise, and the Ten Commandments be taught to all the pupils, and be repeated at least once a week. Any portion of Scripture shall be read without comment or explanation, but no pupil shall be compelled to be present at these exercises against the wish of his parent or guardian, expressed in writing to the master of the school.”

Provision was also made whereby the clergy of any persuasion could give religious instruction to the children of their own denomination after or before school hours.

The course agreed upon then was one which rendered optional the reading of the Bible in school. The trustees could forbid its use altogether if they saw fit. Under this regulation, however, so strong was public opinion in favour of religious instruction, that it was used in the majority of the schools. According to the report of the Education Department for 1884, 254 schools were opened with the reading of the Scriptures only ; 2,882 with the reading of Scriptures and prayer, and 1,914 with prayer alone. This state of affairs was not considered satisfactory to the religious bodies of the country, and in their church courts resolutions were moved from time to time, calling the attention of the Government to what to them appeared to be a radical defect in our system of education, their contention being that the subject of religious instruction was of paramount importance, and that the use of the Bible in school should not depend upon the will of any board of trustees. Resolutions to this effect were passed by several of the leading Protestant denominations, and in order to bring the matter to an issue, a joint deputation from the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Methodist Churches waited on the Attorney-General, on the 23rd of October, 1882. The deputation consisted of the following :—Bishop Hellmuth, Provost Body, Rev. G. B. Kirkpatrick, Rev. J. Middleton, Rev. J. P. Lewis, Rev. W. S. Rainsford, Rev. Canon Bell, Rev. John Langtry, Rev. Canon Dixon, Mr. W. Y. Pettit, Hon. G. W. Allan, Rev. Dr. Nelles, Rev. Dr. Sanderson, Rev. W. Williams (president of the London Conference), Dr. Withrow (in place of Dr. Sutherland, President of the Toronto Conference, who was unavoidably absent), Rev. Dr. Cochrane

(Moderator of the Presbyterian Assembly), Rev. Walter Inglis (Moderator of the Synod of Hamilton and London), Rev. John Laing (Dundas), Dr. Macdonald (Hamilton), Rev. John Smith, Rev. J. M. Cameron, Rev. W. T. McMullin, Rev. John Thompson, Rev. P. F. McLeod, Rev. G. M. Milligan, Rev. Robert Wallace and Mr. James Brown.

At a preliminary meeting of the conference, held prior to the interview with the Attorney-General, the following resolution was adopted, which was submitted to the Attorney-General, as the views of the deputation :

"That this conference pledges itself to press upon the Attorney-General the making of the reading of the Holy Scriptures by the children and teacher, together with the prescribed prayers issued by the Department, an obligatory exercise at the opening of the Public schools of Ontario, the passages of Holy Scripture to be read each day, being prescribed by the Department in conformity with the recommendation of the committee of this conference, or some other representatives of the various churches of Ontario, regard being had in all cases to the provisions of the Consolidated Public Schools Act, Victoria 37, cap. 28, sec. 142, providing that any parent who has conscientious objection shall be entitled to withdraw the child from such instruction ; and that this conference press upon the Government the necessity for a return to the Scriptural and moral instruction contained in the first series of national readers, issued by the Educational Department for use in the Public schools of Ontario, or of some similar Scriptural instruction."

In addressing the Attorney-General in regard to this resolution, Dr. Nelles stated: "It had been prepared with great care, and we have spent quite a number of hours upon it in order that the phraseology might be put in the best form and most likely to secure the object we have in view, and at the same time protect the conscience of those who may differ from us. * * * * I think it will be found to express the wishes and feelings of not only the ministers, but also the laymen of the Methodist Church of Canada." Dr. Cochrane (Presbyterian) said : "The whole church in Canada is all but unanimous for the introduction of the Bible in the Public schools." Provost Body (Church of England) said : "The Synod of the diocese of Toronto were quite unanimous, and the resolutions had been passed without a dissenting voice. They simply ask that the prayers should be said, and that a reading of a portion of Scripture shall be made obligatory and not left simply to the trustees."

This resolution called for five things : (1) That the reading of the Scriptures and prayers be made obligatory ; (2) that the passages to be read be prescribed by the Education Department ; (3) that these selections be made in conformity with the recommendation of this conference or some other representatives of the various churches of Ontario ; (4) that the conscientious scruples of parents and children be respected ; (5) that selections from the Scriptures be introduced into school readers.

Furthermore, it is obvious from the remarks made by the members of the deputation that they did not regard the preparation of a book of selected passages as a mutilation of the Bible.

The same question was taken up at a meeting of the Teachers' Provincial Association in Toronto, in 1883, and the two following resolutions adopted :

1. That the reading of selected portions of Scripture as a part of the regular daily exercises of the school would be a material aid to teachers in the discharge of their duties in respect to such moral training.

2. That the Education Department do make a suitable selection of Scripture reading for the schools under its charge.

The president of the association, A. McMurchy, head master of the Collegiate Institute, in his address to the teachers present, recommended "that the Education Department make selections from the Bible for the use of schools."

Acting on these suggestions, I made such selections from the Scriptures as were thought most suitable for school purposes, and submitted them for revision to a joint meeting of the committee appointed by the different denominations that had taken up the question of religious instruction at the annual meetings of their ecclesiastical courts. By this meeting they were referred to a sub-committee, consisting of Ven. Archdeacon Boddy, Rev. Provost Body, Rev. John Burton, D.D., Rev. Dr. Dawart, Rev. Dr. Laing, Rev. H. D. Powis, and Rev. Dr. Sutherland. They were finally authorized and supplied gratuitously to the Public and High schools, and have since been authorized by the Board of Education of Manitoba for use in the Protestant schools of that Province. Moreover, the Board of Trustees for London, Eng., have similar selections in their schools, in daily use, during the hour allotted to religious instruction.

Now, in acting on such strong representations as were made by the deputation above referred to and sustained by the teachers of the Province in their annual parliament, surely it must be said the Government did not show undue haste.

INTERFERENCE OF ARCHBISHOP LYNCH.

It is said that the Scripture readings were suggested by Archbishop Lynch, with a view to secure the complete expulsion of the Bible from the Public schools. This charge is denied by the Archbishop himself in a letter to the *Mail* of the 16th of June in these words : "With respect to the book of Bible extracts issued by the Minister of Education, we did not think of it, much less suggest it." The charge is also illogical. It surely will not be said that the deputation that waited on the Attorney-General had this object in view, and yet they suggested the preparation of such selections. So also did the Provincial Teachers' Association, on the recommendation of its President. The truth is, that acting on the suggestions of these clergymen and of the teachers of the Province, I had arranged for the preparation of the Scripture readings, and it was not till the selections were made that anybody, except my colleagues and the editor, knew what was being done. The proofs were sent to each member of the committee appointed to consider this question, and to Archbishop Lynch. They were then revised by the committee

of the Protestant churches already referred to, and were subsequently published without any alteration at the hands of the Archbishop, or at his suggestion, or at the suggestion of any member of his church. In regard to the Lord's Prayer His Grace has publicly stated that he suggested the change of the word "which" to "who." That was the only change made, and that change is supported by the authority of the American section of the Committee on the Revision of the New Testament. But why refer them to him at all? The answer to this is easy. The Public schools of Ontario are mixed schools, attended by 50,000 Roman Catholic children. To make the reading of the Scriptures obligatory was a great change in the regulations. Was there anything unreasonable, then, that their representative should be consulted when the representatives of other denominations were consulted? If the Public schools of Ontario were Protestant schools, or if His Grace was consulted as to the method of religious instruction to be imparted in the schools that have taken advantage of the law, and have established Protestant Separate schools, the case would be very different. The question the Department had to settle was not how much religious instruction should be prescribed for the Protestant schools under its care, but how much could be prescribed without destroying the undenominational character of our Public school system, and as a maximum I have taken what was recommended by the deputation referred to. That I have succeeded tolerably well is evident from the unanimity with which the teachers of the Province at their county associations have approved of the new regulations and the cordiality with which the press of the country, both religious and secular, has endorsed my action. Even the *Toronto Mail*, which is not slow to criticise the Ontario Government, had a good word to say. In noticing the publication of the Scripture readings soon after they were authorized, it said:

"The Minister of Education is to be congratulated upon having adopted for use in the common schools a series of readings from the Old and New Testaments, together with a brief form of prayer. The objections to the introduction of the Bible in the schools raised by many laymen and by not a few ministers were undoubtedly of great weight. * * * The extracts adopted in this compilation are such as Christians of every denomination have ever agreed to accept as the plain Word of God. * * * The work has been prepared with the greatest care and cannot fail to commend itself to parents."

The sub-committee appointed to revise the work, in their memorandum given to the public in February last, stated: "That in their opinion a substantial advance has been made by the requirement of Biblical reading in the schools, and we are gratified to witness the general acceptance of the principle of the necessity of the moral and religious element in education."

Moreover, the regulations respecting religious instruction were submitted to the House for its approval last session, and were adopted without a single objection from either side. The only objection from any quarter that has been pressed upon the attention of the public was the protest of the Toronto School Board, and when it is known that that Board is composed principally

of Orangemen, [and under the control of an inspector who is a prominent member of the same order, the object of the Board becomes quite apparent. My course was dictated solely by a regard for the moral welfare of the 500,000 children committed to my care, and in shaping my actions I much prefer the advice and support of those whose Christian profession and character entitle them to speak on behalf of the religious welfare of the community to the surrender of my convictions through any fear of giving offence to men who, whatever their motives may be, are perpetuating the strifes of the past centuries, and sowing the seeds of intolerance and religious bigotry.

To sum up the whole question in a few words, I would point out again what I stated in my report to the House last winter : 1. That, under the present regulations, the reading of the Sacred Scriptures is not left to the mere discretion of the trustees. Their duty is clearly pointed out in order that there may be no misunderstanding of the responsibility under which they are placed. 2. There is a distinct declaration on the part of the Department that religious instruction is an essential factor in our system of education, and both pupils and teachers have daily presented to them, as a standard by which their conduct is to be regulated, the sublime ethics of the Bible. 3. Where formerly there was often misdirected effort by the reading of selections not suited to the capacities of children, now there is a guarantee that every selection may be profitably read. The order of the lessons is such as to secure variety in matter and style of composition. The historical proportions are so arranged as to preserve the continuity of the narrative, and the selections so copious as to include all, or nearly all, that could be read with profit to young children. The volume consists of 281 lessons, all of which may quite conveniently be read once every year. The child who attends school from the age of five to fifteen will hear the greater portion of the Bible read at least ten times. 4. The non-denominational character of this form of religious instruction is preserved by requiring the teacher to read the lesson for the day without "comment or explanation." This provision I regard as most important. When the most learned, who give a lifetime to the study of the Bible, differ in regard to interpretation, it certainly would not be wise to authorize teachers who have no special training to speak with the authority peculiar to their profession, and perhaps mislead, if not pervert, the minds of their pupils. 5. The conscientious scruples of teachers and pupils are fully protected. The regulations distinctly provide that no teacher is required to read the selections who notifies trustees that he has conscientious objections, and that no pupil need attend upon their reading if forbidden by the parents. 6. Provision is made whereby the clergy of different denominations may, after school hours, give such additional religious instructions as they may deem necessary, and trustees are authorized to shorten the hours of daily study in order to facilitate this object. It must not be forgotten that our Public and High schools are public institutions, maintained for the purpose of developing the highest type of citizenship. While to this end a moral education is indispensable, it would defeat the

whole purpose and policy of the system to fasten upon it any form of sectarianism which would alienate that public confidence and attachment under which it has hitherto prospered so well ; adding as point 7 that teachers are recommended in the preface of the volume to write suitable texts upon the blackboard and ask the pupils to commit them to memory. What more could be done with propriety, I at present fail to see.

From what I have now said I hope you have no doubt respecting the policy of my Department, in some matters likely to be in issue during the next election. To summarize, let me say it will, so long as I am entrusted with its management, be the policy of that Department :—

1. To promote the efficiency of the whole school system of the Province in all its varied interests.
2. To make it practical, simple, and thorough.
3. To preserve inviolate its undenominational and democratic characteristics.
4. To avoid all capricious changes in the School Law and Regulations.
5. To make no changes in text-books without due notice, and only to increase the efficiency of the schools.
6. To promote, by all proper influences, the moral welfare of the pupil.
7. To aid out of public funds, as far as the Provincial revenues will admit, Boards of Trustees in the discharge of their duties.
8. To secure the thorough training of teachers of every grade.

